In the Claims:

Cancel claims 1-14, and 24; kindly amend claims 15 – 23, and add new claim 25 as shown in the following marked-up version of the claims.

Claims 1-14. (canceled)

15. (currently amended) A method for replicating HCMV ~~which comprises~~ comprising the following steps:

a) provision of an HCMV in whose genome an essential gene has been deleted,

b) provision of a stably transfected mammalian cell line which expresses the HCMV gene deleted in a),

c) replication of the deleted virus from a) in cells from b).

16. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ human foreskin fibroblasts are transfected in step b).

17. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the mammalian cells are transfected with the aid of a lipid-containing reagent.

18. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the mammalian cells are transfected by the "Fugene" reagent.

19. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the HCMV in step a) harbors a deletion in the gene of the major capsid protein (UL86).

20. (currently amended) A method for producing viral particles ~~which comprises~~ comprising the following steps:

a) provision of HCMV as set forth in any of claims 15-19,

b) infection of mammalian cells with virus which has been replicated as in step a),

c) isolation of viral particles from cells which have been infected as in step b), ~~where~~ wherein

d) the particles are surrounded by a lipid membrane in which viral glycoproteins are embedded,

e) the particles contain neither viral DNA nor capsids.

21. (previously presented) A composition comprising sub-viral particles wherein the sub-viral particles are released after infection of mammalian cells by human cytomegalovirus (HCMV) wherein,

a) the particles are surrounded by a lipid membrane in which viral glycoproteins are embedded,

b) the particles contain neither viral DNA nor capsids,

and pharmaceutically acceptable carrier for immunization against HCMV diseases and infections.

22. (previously presented) The composition of claim 21, wherein the sub-viral particles additionally contain a fusion protein comprising one or more parts of the T-cell antigen pp65 (UL83) and one or more parts of one or more proteins which are not pp65.

23. (previously presented) The composition of claim 21, wherein the sub-viral particles contain parts of gB and/or gH proteins which are variants of a particular glycoprotein from different HCMV strains.

24. (canceled)

25. (new) A composition comprising the viral particles of claim 20 and pharmaceutically acceptable carrier for immunization against HCMV diseases and infections.